

PATENT SPECIFICATION

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DRAWINGS ATTACHED

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(54) FINGER SUPPORT FOR INJECTION AMPOULES

(71) We, CHEMIE GRUNENTHAL GMBH, a body corporate organised under the laws of Germany, of 5190 Stolberg/Rheinland, Germany, do hereby declare the invention, for which we pray that a patent may be granted to us, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:—

This invention relates to a finger support for injection ampoules.

Injection ampoules are being increasingly used for the injection of medicaments. In principle, these injection ampoules generally consist of a glass body acting as container for the medicament, which is closed at one end by a piston-like plug and which carries, or is designed to be connected to, an injection needle. To facilitate holding of the glass body, the ampoule is provided at its rear end with a projection made, for instance, from plastics material or metal, which may be, for example, oval in outline, which acts as a finger support during injection. In one known device, a rotationally symmetrical ampoule body made of glass tubing is provided at its rear end with a retaining lip onto which is snapped a handle, produced separately from a plastics material, which acts as a finger support. During assembly of this known instrument, the plastics handle has to be pressed onto the glass body over the retaining lip thereof, as a result of which the glass body and also the plastics component are frequently damaged. If attempts are made to overcome this drawback by using a softer plastics material for the handle or by increasing the size of the recess in the handle into which the retaining lip snaps, the handle often becomes detached from the glass body. In another known device, the plastics finger support is in two parts. One of these parts completely accommodates the lip arranged at the end of the rotationally

symmetrical ampoule body and possesses a collar-like projection, over which the second part of the finger support tightly engages. This second part is in the form of a cap with a central aperture to allow a piston rod to pass therethrough into the ampoule body. Although this known embodiment avoids the main disadvantages of the other known embodiment discussed above, it has its own particular disadvantage that, during withdrawal of the piston (which is necessary, for example, during the suction of liquids into the ampoule or during the aspiration step that is essential before injection), the finger support readily separates into its constituent parts and, as a result, becomes unusable. In addition, this known finger support is also unsuitable for preventing accidental removal of the piston-like plug.

The present invention relates to a finger support for injection ampoules which does not have any of the disadvantages attending conventional designs.

The present invention provides a finger support for injection ampoules having a rotationally symmetrical glass ampoule body with a retaining lip, which support comprises an annular finger rest adapted to fit over the retaining lip and having a continuous groove encircling its bore, and an annular holding member having a corresponding tongue on its outer surface adapted to fit into the groove of the finger rest thereby to effectively attach the holding member to the glass ampoule body. By "annular holding member" is meant either a continuous ring or a snap ring which has a gap therein.

The finger support according to the invention is described in detail below with reference to the accompanying drawing in which:

Fig. 1 is a cross-section through the rear end of an injection ampoule fitted with the finger support according to the invention;

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Fig. 2 is a plan view of the finger support;
Fig. 3 is a plan view of one embodiment of
the annular holding member;

Fig. 4 and 5 are, respectively, a cross-
section and a plan view of another em-
bodiment of the annular holding member;
and

Fig. 6 is a plan view of yet another em-
bodiment of the annular holding member.

Referring now to Fig. 1 of the drawing,
the reference (1) denotes a rotationally
symmetrical ampoule body of glass which
has a retaining lip (2) as known *per se*. The
reference (3) denotes an annular finger rest,
preferably made of a plastics material,
which has a groove (4) extending round its
bore in that part projecting beyond the glass
body (1). An annular holding member (5),
which can consist for example of a plastics
material, has a tongue (6) arranged on its
outer edge, the tongue (6) being inserted
into the groove (4) of the finger rest (3).

The annular holding member (5) is
preferably designed in such a way that the
face thereof which is not in contact with the
ampoule body and the corresponding face
of the finger rest (3), lie in one plane as
shown in Figure 1.

Fig. 2 is a plan view of the finger rest (3).
Pimples (7) which are shown more clearly in
Figure 2 than in Figure 1 are arranged
around the inner circumference of the
finger rest (3) and serve, by virtue of their
compressibility to compensate any minor
variations in the external diameter of glass
bodies (1) produced by different
manufacturers. In addition, they prevent the
assembled finger support from readily
rotating relative to the glass body (1). If
however, the glass body (1) and the finger
rest (3) are manufactured with adequate
precision so that the outer surface of the
glass body is closely contiguous with the
inner surface of the finger rest, it is possible
to dispense altogether with the pimples (7).

The annular holding member (5) whose
tongue (6) can be inserted into the groove
(4) of the finger rest (3) can be in the form of
a snap ring (5a) or in the form of a con-
tinuous ring (5b).

Fig. 3 is a plan view of the snap ring (5a).
On either side of a gap (8), the snap ring (5a)
has either bores or projections (9), to make
it easier to bring the ends of the snap ring
(5a) together during assembly of the finger
support. In the case of bores, the ends of an
assembly tool, for example, tweezers, can be
inserted into them, while in the case of
projections, these will extend substantially
perpendicular to the plane of the snap ring
and on that side of the ring which does not
come into contact with the ampoule body.
These projections are used not only to make
assembly easier, but also as an aid in seeing
whether the ring (5a) is in the correct

position during preparation for assembly.

Figs. 4 and 5 show the annular holding
member (5) in the form of a continuous ring
(5b) respectively in cross section and in plan
view. It is even clear from the cross-section
shown in Fig. 4 than from Fig. 1 that, to
accommodate the retaining lip (2) of the
glass body (1), the annular holding member
(5), especially when it is in the form of a
continuous ring (5b), preferably has a
corresponding conical depression.

The internal diameter of the annular
holding member (5) is preferably smaller
than the internal diameter of the glass body
(1) of the injection ampoule, so that the
holding member (5) performs the additional
function of preventing accidental with-
drawal of the piston-like closure plug for the
glass body (1), not shown.

In order more effectively to prevent the
closure plug from being pulled out, the inner
opening of the holding member (5), as
shown in Fig. 6, can be provided with an
encircling tongue (10) which acts like a stop
surface for the backwardly sliding closure
plug.

Accordingly, the finger support according
to the invention represents a securely in-
terconnected combination of the finger rest
(3) with the holding member (5) which
surrounds the retaining lip (2) of the glass
body (1). For assembly purposes, the finger
rest (3) is pushed from the end distal of the
lip (2) over the glass body (1) of the in-
jection ampoule until it rests on the
retaining lip (2), after which it is fixed in this
position by the annular holding member (5)
whose tongue (6) is inserted into the groove
(4). By virtue of this arrangement and
method of assembly, the glass body (1) is not
subject to any mechanical stressing, thus
ruling out the danger of breakage during
assembly of the finger support. Independent
or unintentional separation of the parts (3)
and (5) from one another (as a result of
which the finger support would become
unusable), either during storage of the
injection ampoule or, for example, during
withdrawal of the closure plug, is safely
prevented with this arrangement.

The finger rest (3) and the holding
member (5) of the finger support according
to the invention can be made from the same
material or from different materials, more
particularly from such plastics as
polyethylene, or polystyrene. It is of course
also possible, however, to use other
materials, for example, aluminium for the
finger rest (3) or, for example, sprung steel
for the snap ring (5a). The continuous ring
(5b) is preferably made from a slightly more
rigid material than the finger rest (3),
making assembly easier.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A finger support for injection ampoules

5 having a rotationally symmetrical glass
ampoule body with a retaining lip, which
support comprises an annular finger rest
adapted to fit over the retaining lip and
having a continuous groove encircling its
bore, and an annular holding member (as
herein defined) having a corresponding
tongue on its outer surface adapted to fit
into the groove of the finger rest thereby to
effectively attach the holding member to the
glass ampoule body.

10 2. A finger support as claimed in Claim 1,
wherein the internal diameter of the annular
holding member is smaller than the internal
diameter of the ampoule body.

15 3. A finger support as claimed in Claim 1
or 2, wherein the annular holding member is
recessed so as to accommodate the retaining
lip of the ampoule body.

20 4. A finger support as claimed in any of
Claims 1 to 3, wherein the annular holding
member has an inwardly projecting tongue
encircling its bore.

5. A finger support as claimed in any of

Claims 1 to 4, wherein the annular holding
member is a continuous ring. 25

6. A finger support as claimed in any of
Claims 1 to 4, wherein the annular holding
member is a snap ring.

7. A finger support as claimed in Claim 6, 30
wherein the snap ring has a bore or
projection extending perpendicular to the
plane of the ring and situated at each end of
the ring.

8. A finger support as claimed in any of 35
Claims 1 to 7, wherein a radially inwardly-
projecting pimples are arranged around the
inner circumference of the finger rest.

9. A finger support as claimed in Claim 1 40
substantially as hereinbefore described with
reference to the accompanying drawing.

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Fig.1.

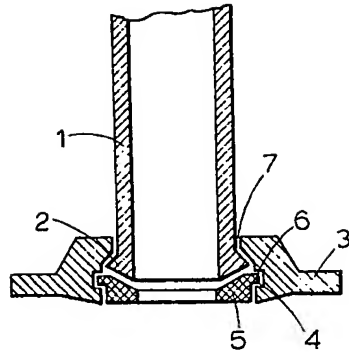


Fig.2.

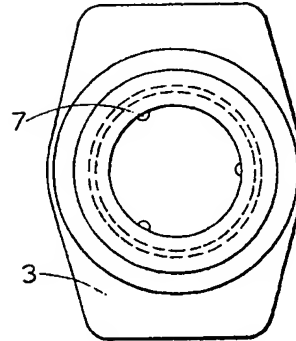


Fig.3.

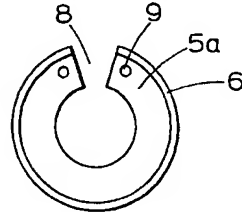


Fig.4.

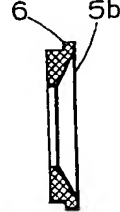


Fig.5.

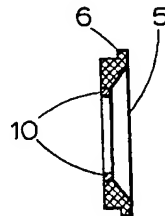
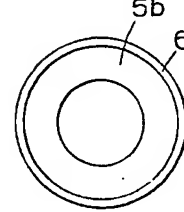


Fig.6.